

ENCOR FAMILY RESOURCE SERVICES

Basic Principles: . -

1. It is a common observance that services provided to children may be ineffective or only partially effective unless the parents understand and cooperate in the service goals. Services to retarded children will therefore suffer in their efficacy unless appropriate guidance and counseling of parents can be provided.
2. Some measures of child management are most effective if undertaken in the home by the family, rather than outside, the home by agencies. Family guidance can help families to institute and maintain such management measures.
3. Timely family guidance can often forestall developments requiring the need for much more costly services later. A typical example is parental counseling when a damaged child is born. Such counseling and other inexpensive forms of help may prevent costly institutionalization or family didisintegration.
4. Evaluation and guidance are so intimately related that they should be viewed as inseparable aspects of the human management approach.

Family Guidance:

Guidance of families of the retarded could assume several forms. The most common would be to communicate the findings of diagnostic and clinical evaluations to parents; to help parents understand the implications of these findings; to assist families in implementing recommendations; and to secure parental cooperation in coordinating the child's management within the home with his management by other service programs. In some cases, such interpretation and guidance must be provided not only to the parents, but also to other members of the family unit such as siblings and/or grandparents.

In addition to working with families individually, an efficient way of helping parents is working with them in groups. ENCOR will work through GOARC to involve parents in courses which will be offered both during the day and in the evening which explain basic facts about mental retardation. Informal discussions for parents are also being established thorough GOARC. These groups are set up to focus on particular types of problems shared by a number of families. Book club programs in which parents engage in a course of guide readings about mental retardation, appear to be a promising guidance tool which could be developed by either ENCOR or GOARC. Such group techniques are effective and economical.

It would be desirable for the division to develop a resource center of educational and guidance materials. Included would be a library of reading materials for parents. Additional resources and materials could be stocked, displayed, and demonstrated to parents and in some cases loaned to them at a small fee. Such resources might include special self- help and training aides such as; feeding equipment, special types of children's highchairs, special walkers, etc. Such material is often too expensive for families to acquire, but being nearly indestructible, could be rented for limited periods for which a need develops.